**Pastor Demetric Felton Sr November 8, 2020**

**A Small Church With Determined Faith**

Revelation 2:8-11

**Key Truth:** Jesus’ faithfulness to us enables us to remain faithful to Him through times of suffering.

**The Character Of The Church in Smyrna:**

1. They were being persecuted for their faith.

2. They were a financially impoverished church.

3. They were an extremely faithful church.

4. They received no criticism from Jesus just words of comfort.

**The Truth About Christian Suffering**: **1 Peter 4:12-18**

1. Not all suffering is connected to your faith.

2. Life in and of itself brings general suffering that we all endure

 because of the fall of Adam.

3. There is particular suffering brought on by our bad decisions.

4. Christian suffering has everything to do with your allegiance

 and faith in Jesus.

**Remaining Faithful In the Midst of Trials:**

1. Remember, prayer doesn’t always get you out of a trial.

2. God’s will for some is not always to deliver you a from trial,

 but to test you and refine you.

3. Jesus Christ commands us is to be faithful in the midst of

 trials.

4. Jesus Christ authority and power are what comforts us during

 trials.

**Taking It Beyond The Walls:** Pray that God would strengthen the faith and deepen the joy of our Church so that we would be prepared to persevere in faith should persecution or suffering arise. Pray for our brothers and sisters experiencing persecution all over the world.

**Connection Group Homework**

Looking back at your notes, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

Read Revelation 2:8-11: The believers in Smyrna were very poor, but Jesus told them they were rich. What did He mean by that?

How are all followers of Christ rich spiritually? Read Ephesians 1:3-14 to aid in your discussion.

Read James 1:1-4,12: In what circumstances does James command us to be joyful? How is this possible?

How do you tend to respond to difficulty or persecution in your life? How does your attitude compare to the one James commands believers to adopt in such situations?

In what specific ways does suffering provide an opportunity for believers to show they believe in Jesus and rejoice? How is Jesus’ life a model for this?

How can testing or trials actually strengthen a believer’s faith? What is promised to those who “persevere under trial” (v. 12)? How have you experienced this?

Read Daniel 3:13-18: How did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego prove their faithfulness to God? How did their faithfulness witness to the Greatness of God? (See Daniel 3:28-30)